Our Hitler Goebbels' 1941 Speech on Hitler's Birthday

We Germans do not have sufficient historical distance to evaluate the full scope of the age in which we are living. We are children of our age. We have been formed by our age, and we in turn are forming it. It will be the task of later generations to evaluate it properly and to determine what is really admirable and what is simply normal. Future generations will surely envy the fact that we have lived a life of struggle, that we had the good fortune to have political passion, a passion that Heinrich von Treitschke once said finds little room in the hearts of most people.

There are rare moments in the middle of the pressures of daily life when we suddenly are struck by the feeling that everything before us is history, and that a new world is now being born. We experience the birth pangs of all that is young and new, and realize that this new world is replacing the old and sinking one, with all its peculiarities, tenseness, and prejudice. If there are men who make history, if great historical developments are the product of individual personalities, then the riddle of our era is to be explained only by the grace of a brilliant human being. It is no cliché to say that everything we experience today and for which we expend our best energies would not be, or at least would be very different, were it not for one man who forged the path and showed the way, giving meaning, content, and direction to our age. We are experiencing the greatest wonder that history offers: a genius is building a new world.

When is this more evident than today, as the entire German nation and countless millions beyond its borders send their thanks, their honor, their admiration, their deepest hopes and their unshakable faith in him and his historic mission, to the Führer on his 52nd birthday? They are the feelings that most deeply move each German above all. There will be in this hard year of war no noisy popular festivals, no parades, and no splendid public performances. These feelings are expressed even more deeply and warmly by those who do their daily duty, be it by our best fighting men at the front or at home in the armaments industries. The German people honor the Führer on his birthday by pledging redoubled efforts to support his work. Our love and honor for him give wings to our struggle and to our work for victory.

Two years ago, we celebrated his 50th birthday with the most splendid parade that the Reich capital had ever seen. The German people saw clearly for the first time how strong the Reich had become in under six years of National Socialist government. We hoped then that the Führer's efforts to preserve peace for our nation and the world would succeed. Already the fanfares of hatred were sounding from London and Paris, calling for war at any price. We knew that if our enemies once more forced the Reich to fight for its national existence, the German people for the first time in their history would be united in all their branches, prepared spiritually, economically and militarily, ready to present the world with a wonder of strength, manliness, sovereign political and spiritual superiority, military power and precision.

Our eternal enemies declared war on us in September of that year, and since then the German wonder has become reality. The German soldier defeated the enemy wherever he met him. In breathtaking victories unique in history, brilliant offensives defeated Poland, Norway, Holland, Belgium, and France. England has been thrown from the continent, and the British Empire is receiving powerful blows in the homeland, on the Atlantic and in North Africa that are shaking its foundations. If one asks how our enemies could declare war on the Reich under such conditions, the only answer is that they did not believe in the enormous power of a great personality nor in the strength of his work. They still thought of Germany as it had been in November 1918, exhausted, and defenseless against the false promises of its enemies, with no knowledge of its national mission and without determined and strong leadership. They did not think it possible that one man could bring about a wonder that would lift this people from the pit to which it had fallen and lead a wonderful regeneration that made it once more conscious of its strengths.

Only rarely have the German people experienced a true national task. While other nations in the world did what was necessary to secure their political and economic security by establishing the necessary military bases and reserves of raw materials, we Germans poured out our blood chasing phantoms. For the first time in this war, Germany is a strong power, defending its interests, which are not the increased profits of a capitalist ruling class, but rather the preservation of its national existence. Each of us knows this today. We gave no illusions as we fight the war. We all know what it is about. We know that its outcome will determine our national life. We know that it must be won by the whole people for the whole people, and that a German victory will mean that the Reich is firmly guarded on all sides

and that Germany's national existence is secured. That will give our people the possibility to live and work politically and economically.

Foreign visitors who visit the Reich during the war are amazed at the calm with which the German people look at current and coming events. Nothing would be more false than to assume this was the result of indifference of lack of interest. Our confidence rests on security. Our people do not know, and do not even want to know, what the Führer is planning and how he will gain victory. They simply trust him. He will choose the right way, as he has always done. Our people had no worries before the Western offensive as to how the Führer would break through the Maginot Line to attack France. They simply believed that he had a plan and the means. When Holland, Belgium and France were defeated within six weeks as the world held its breath, the German people were more pleased than surprised. They saw only renewed confirmation of their faith in the Führer. Our people know that if the nation is loyal, faithful, and dutiful and if each does his job, Germany is unbeatable and victory after victory will accompany our troops.

What enormous strength lies in this confidence! How childish and silly, to the contrary, are the repeated stupid efforts by British plutocracy to shake this confidence, to bring the people in conflict with the Führer, to weaken the fighting spirit of our army by lying rumors. Every German soldier today knows that we have only been defeated when we succumbed to such a temptation, and that Germany has always been triumphant which it was conscious of its strength and directed it outwardly, not inwardly.

The winter in which London placed such great hopes is long over. We filled it with feverish preparations. The entire nation worked day and night to supply our army with a surplus of weapons and munitions. The internal organization of our national life continues to function flawlessly, and the burdens war brings with it are fairly distributed and bearable for everyone. The attempts of British plutocracy to win victories on the periphery or to cause the German people to doubt or lose courage during the long waiting period have been in vain. These attempts had no impact on us. The German people did not only wait during the winter, they also fought and worked. We did not make as much noise about it as did the English. The enemy has already seen the results of our preparations in the campaign in the Southeast, in North Africa, in the Battle of the Atlantic, and in the air war against the English motherland. That all goes to show that wars are not won through newspaper articles, but rather with ideas, soldiers, weapons, and munitions.

A people wins when it has the prerequisites to victory, when it wants to win, and when it must win. All that is true for us. This evening we look back along the path we have followed since September 1939, and forward to what is still shrouded in darkness, illuminated by the light of our faith. It is the path to final victory. We have never believed in it as firmly as we do today. The Führer leads us, and that is the best foundation of our confidence.

When Mr. Churchill spoke recently about the outcome of this war, he declared that England would win, he just did not know how. We reply, The Führer will win because he also knows how he will win. He has filled the nation with his spirit. It is tuned to his will. This time, they will survive the great test of faith that will decide their future, ending the 400-year series of German mistakes and failures. That is why this age is so great for us Germans and why, despite the war, it is so encouraging. Our people have a chance, one that we will use. An armed people, led by one will and filled with conviction — that is victory!

A man who has created such things stands far above any words of praise. The nation can only bow in thankfulness before him. We all do that in this hour. We thank the fate that sent us the Führer in the midst of our deepest need. We, his old fighting companions throughout the German Reich and our soldiers at the Front above all are grateful to fate that it gave us in our early years the strength and insight to recognize his greatness and to be with him from the beginning along his eventful way to victory and triumph. Who among us would chose to miss even one day of these last hard years, always filled with battle and work? Who among us does not think it his highest good fortune, indeed the real meaning and fulfillment of his life, to have been with him as he won the revolution, and to be with him now as he is winning the great war for Germany's life and freedom? We have fought at his side long enough to know both from experience and knowledge that victory is as good as certain. We only must remain strong, faithful, brave and upright, striding with heads high toward the hour of our proudest triumph.

Thus, we greet him on the eve of his birthday. The entire nation joins in this greeting, and in expressing its deepest and most profound thankfulness for him. Our soldiers bear his names on their lips, wherever they may stand or march. Our workers sing his name as they work. Our men on the battle fronts, above all those in the Southeast and North Africa who defend the nation's security, our officers and soldiers of the air force who carry death

and destruction to the British Isles, our men in the navy who have set an iron ring around Great Britain, they all greet him as their supreme commander. Our farmers and workers greet him as their Führer and our women thank him for fighting for the future of their children. The German youth gives him their strongest faith. He is ours. He has made this people what it is today. Where would we be if he had not come? We ask fate to keep him healthy and to grant success to his work for the freedom of our people. Then we need not fear the future. Then the German people can face the proudest period of their historical development. Once the flags of our revolution fluttered over the entire Reich. Now we long for that happy day, and fight for it with all our might, when the flags of our victory will fly over the entire Reich.

Tomorrow we celebrate his fanatic devotion to his work. Despite the war, a festive air fills the whole nation. It is his day, and it is our day. It reminds us once more what our lives have become because of him. We therefore wish him what we have always wished for: May he remain for us what he was and is – Our Hitler!